



STRUTHIDEA CINEREA: Gould.



## STRUTHIDEA CINEREA, *Gould.*

### Grey Struthidea.

*Struthidea cinerea*, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part IV. p. 143; and in Syn. Birds of Australia, Part I.—G. R. Gray, List of Gen. of Birds, 2nd Edit., p. 51.

*Brachystoma cinerea*, Swains. An. in Menag., and Two Cent. and a Quarter of New Birds, No. 51.—Class. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 266.

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So LITTLE information has been obtained respecting this highly curious bird, that my account of it must necessarily be very meagre. From what I have personally observed, it would seem to be a species peculiar to the interior, and so far as is yet known, confined to the south-eastern portion of the Australian continent. I found it inhabiting the pine ridges, as they are termed by the colonists, bordering the extensive plains of the Upper and Lower Namoi, and giving a decided preference to the *Callitris pyramidalis*, a fine fir-like tree peculiar to the district. Those I observed were always in small companies of three or four together, on the topmost branches of the trees, and were extremely quick and restless, the whole company leaping from branch to branch in rapid succession, at the same time throwing up and expanding their tails and wings; these actions were generally accompanied with a harsh unpleasant note; their manners, in fact, closely resembled those of the White-winged Chough and the *Pomatorhini*: a knowledge of its nidification and the number and colour of its eggs would throw considerable light upon the affinities of this curious form. I would, therefore, particularly impress upon those who may reside in, or visit the localities it inhabits, to pay especial attention to, and to make known their observations upon, these points.

The food, as ascertained by dissection, was insects; the stomachs of those examined were tolerably hard and muscular, and contained the remains of coleoptera.

The sexes assimilate so closely in size and in the colouring of their plumage, that they are to be distinguished only by dissection.

Head, neck, back, and under surface grey, each feather tipped with lighter grey; wings brown; tail black, the middle feathers glossed with deep rich metallic green; irides pearly white; bill and legs black.

The figures are of the natural size.